NATIONAL CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

1921

Advance Reports

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Executive Committee, Report of Treasurer, Social Service Commission, Commission on the Status of the Ministry, Commission on Ordained Women, Church Assistants and Lay Workers, and Commission on Organization.

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REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The shadow of a great loss has rested upon us ever since the shocking news came, last summer, of the tragic death of our Secretary, so greatly honored and beloved, Hubert C. Herring. Sympathetic recognition of this loss has been made to Dr. Herring's family and an appreciation of his character has been entered on the pages of the Year Book. The Chairman of the Committee has been requested to speak of Dr. Herring, also, at the Communion Service of the Council.

Nine meetings of the Executive Committee have been held since the Council at Grand Rapids, one in Chicago, the others in New York, beside several informal conferences between members locally accessible. All the members elected have served, with the exception of Rev. Robert R. Wicks of Holyoke, Mass., who has found it necessary to resign, owing to ill health. The earnest and devoted interest of the members of the Committee has been notable.

To secure one who would fill the position of Secretary, until the election by the Council, was the pressing need after the loss of Dr. Herring. As soon as the attention of the Committee was directed to Rev. Edward D. Eaton, formerly President of Beloit, there was unanimous judgment as to his fitness for the position. Trained in problems of administration, wise in counsel and courteous in manner, methodical and industrious in handling details, he has given unremitting attention to the work of the office and although engaged on part time service the interests of the denomination have been upon his mind continuously and the duties falling to him have been discharged most acceptably. A lasting debt of gratitude will be his due.

Early in 1920, after considerable investigation of available men, Mr. Truman J. Spencer, then of Hartford, Conn., was appointed Assistant Secretary. He has brought to the position an established loyalty to the denomination and eager interest in its welfare, a keen and retentive memory,

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which will be of increasing value with the years, and an accurate and methodical habit of work. The conduct of the New York office has been admirable, Miss Eleanore W. Nichols continuing her efficient service in special charge of the Year Book.

The Year Book has been published as usual, serious delay however, being due to the printers' strike. The cost of publication has been somewhat more than $14,000, an increase of more than double the cost of five years ago, mainly arising from higher rates of labor. The established policy of free distribution to all ministers and to church clerks upon request has been continued. The column reporting "Invested Funds" is being used temporarily for the Pilgrim Fund and another adjustment makes room for the Congregational World Movement.

Much of the Secretary's time, during the spring of 1920, was devoted to arrangements for the International Council. The record of that notable gathering, with the important reports of the various commissions, bringing inspiration to our churches and strengthening the ties between our own and the mother-country, has already been written into our history and need not be detailed here. The expense was in the neighborhood of $25,000. To this will be added about $3,000 for printing the proceedings. This has been provided in large part by generous contributions from individuals and some of our more resourceful churches. A deficit, however, has been incurred, of at least $3,500. To meet this, assurances from other sources were considered good but it now appears that this amount will have to be carried by the Council Treasury, until other provision is made.

On June 3rd, 1920, a joint meeting of the chairmen and representatives of the various commissions of the Council was held in New York. This was in pursuance of the policy to give a greater degree of coordination to the work done by various groups of investigators by bringing them into conference with each other and with the Executive Committee.

The most outstanding subject, which received the atten-

tion of the above-mentioned group and which is forging to the front in all ecclesiastical bodies is the question of church unity. Beside hearing from the Commission of Fifteen appointed to confer with a Commission of the Episcopal General Convention, the Council will receive the report of the Delegates to the Inter-Church Conference on Organic Unity. This will be so important and far-reaching in its significance and will involve so many details requiring specific consideration beside the fundamental principles, which are of utmost importance, your committee has recommended that the plan for organic church union be presented to the National Council for consideration but not for definite action, that through the Council it be submitted to the churches, the final action to be taken at the Council in 1923. This will forestall any precipitate action, it will provide opportunity for thorough and deliberate discussion of this great theme throughout our entire constituency and thus the mind of our churches should become clearly known.

The relation of the denomination to The Congregationalist has been newly brought to the attention of your committee by an acute financial situation which developed in the fall of 1920. The indebtedness of the Publishing Society on account of the increased cost of various publications, including The Congregationalist, was so large that the bank which for many years has carried the notes of the Society felt unable to do so any longer unless a substantial reduction was made in the amount of the loan or assurance given of more adequate financial support for the Society.

It seemed clearly unwise at that time to appeal to the denomination for any considerable amount of money. The other alternative was to transfer the financial responsibility for the Congregationalist to the Education Society, thus relieving the Publishing Society and bringing the paper into more vital relation to the denomination and securing better financial backing. This proved acceptable to the bank and the transfer was effected with the cordial approval and cooperation of all immediately concerned. It is a reassuring instance of good team-work in a difficult situation.

This transfer was provisional and temporary, made under the authorization of the Executive Committee in conference with the Commission on Missions, and by the concurring action of the two Societies. It remains for the Council to determine whether this or any similar relation shall be made permanent. It thus brings before the national body the entire question of the policy to be followed with reference to our denominational organ.

The subject will be presented more in detail by others, while a thorough discussion would require more space than is here available. It seems important, however, to bring into view some of the broader considerations bearing upon this exceedingly important question.

The Congregationalist is one of the essential organs of our denomination. The collective and increasingly corporate life of our churches cannot function without it. There must be a medium for the interchange of thought, method and achievement, and a spokesman of our common interests. The need of such an informing and unifying agency is unmistakable.

This was the main consideration, in the mind of Dr. Herring and others, favoring the purchase of The Advance. As was feared at the time this has been a costly venture. Although the terms of purchase were determined under an appraisal made by three expert newspaper men, the sum was felt by many to be unduly large. The list of subscribers to The Advance, turned over to The Congregationalist, has proved a disappointment, not yielding as many permanent subscribers to the present paper as was anticipated.

In spite of these unfavorable items, which should not be unduly emphasized, the merger of the two papers has been brought about in good spirit and (to a large degree) has resulted in precisely what was desired, a national constituency served by one organ, free from controversy or sectionalism and increasingly homogeneous.

The cost of The Advance, however, has not been the main item in the financial situation. The major difficulty has arisen from the unprecedently high cost of production,

which every paper of this class has experienced to its dismay. The outlay on the mechanical side last year has been from twelve to fifteen thousand dollars more than it was the preceding year. In spite of this, through retrenchments of various sorts, the deficit was only about $5,000 more than in the previous year, and the price has not been raised.

Beside the transfer to the Education Society, the situation has been still further alleviated by the action of the Congregational World Movement in putting the paper for this year on the list of objects to share in the contributions from the churches. From $5,000 to $10,000 may be expected from this source. Still greater will be the relief afforded by the increased percentage for the Education Society in 1922, in the interest of the Congregationalist.

In view of all the facts the policy of the denomination seems reasonably clear. A newspaper, devoted to the interests of our churches, is essential. Such a paper will not be maintained by private enterprise nor can it be expected, under present conditions, to be entirely self-supporting. It must be regarded as an agency of our common life, furnishing news, promoting education, offering leadership and religious inspiration and in every way providing a clearing house for distinctively church interests. Its maintenance must be assumed by our united action. A resolution looking to this end will be submitted.

The action of the Council at Grand Rapids, recommending a contribution from the churches of one cent per capita for the traveling expenses of the delegates, in addition to five cents per capita for regular Council expenses, has met the general approval of the churches. One state in adopting the increased rate has reserved to itself the handling of the funds for its own delegates. Otherwise there is substantially unanimous acceptance of the suggestion.

In carrying out the purpose of this action, the Council at Los Angeles admits of only partial application of the plan. There is considerable variation in the dates when state meetings are held, some coming in the spring, others in the fall. Hence it has been impossible to secure action on the part of all the states that would take effect at the

beginning of the two-year period just passing. Accordingly, the amount available for the present Council is about $9,000, instead of the full amount of $15,000, which may be anticipated later.

For this tentative beginning of the plan the simplest way has been to distribute to the delegates attending the Council the money available on the basis of the mileage traveled. This will amount to approximately one-half cent per mile. This is a meagre sum, in view of the extraordinary distance, and in no way should be regarded as typical of the value or usual operation of the plan.

Hereafter, when the full amount of $15,000 is available, and when the Council is held in a location fairly central to our constituency, it will be possible to pay to each delegate approximately two cents per mile for the distance traveled. This would be the simplest method and doubtless would promote the desired result of an increased and more widely representative attendance.

The alternative to this method would be the adoption of a zone system, by which proportionally larger payments would be made to those coming from longer distances and hence incurring greater expense both for travel and incidentals. Considerable study has been given to this possibility and the details will be presented at the time of the Council. Probably, however, the simpler method will approve itself as more feasible.

REPORT OF TREASURER OF NATIONAL COUNCIL

Year Ending Dec. 31, 1919

RECEIPTS

Cash Balance, Jan. 1, 1919		$ 436.94
Per Capita Dues from Churches	$32,113.25	
Advertising in Year Book	270.00	
Sale of Year Books and Printed Matter	529.48	
Interest on Deposits and Funds held by Corporation for Council	167.22	33,079.95
		$33,516.89

EXPENDITURES

Salaries	$ 5,291.61
Clerical Labor	4,192.08
Traveling Expenses	925.93
Rent	1,345.68
Office Supplies	293.37
Postage	926.99
Telephone	135.50
Sundry Expenses	541.08
Moving Expenses	717.25
Year Book	10,357.41
Advance Reports, Minutes of National Council	851.66
Printing Leaflets	395.10
Miscellaneous Printing	125.64
Expenses of Committees & Commissions:	
Executive Committee	427.02
Commission on Missions	701.91
Organization	57.68
Evangelism	14.24
Religious Education	33.50
Comity, Federation & Unity	157.49
Social Service	36.46

Temperance	2.50	
Status of Ministry	165.25	
Council Meeting	2,719.90	
Federal Council	1,583.00	
International Council	75.00	
Note—Old Colony Trust Co.	1,000.00	33,074.25
Balance December 31, 1919		442.64
		$33,516.89

PILGRIM TERCENTENARY FUND

Year Ending Dec. 31, 1919

RECEIPTS

Cash Balance, Jan. 1, 1919		$69.43
Appropriation by National Mission Boards for Secretary of Benevolence	$ 3,250.88	
Special Tercentenary Subscriptions	2,780.00	
Appropriation by National Mission Boards for Every Member Drive	1,879.41	
Sale of Leaflets, E. M. D. Buttons, etc.	543.79	
Interest on Deposits	39.61	
		8,493.69
		$8,563.12

EXPENDITURES

Salary, W. W. Scudder	$ 3,000.00
Clerical Labor	1,032.95
Rent	246.50
Traveling Expenses	591.50
Postage	70.92
Printing Pamphlets, Leaflets, etc.	400.24
Leaflets, Buttons, Postage, Express, etc., for Every Member Drive	2,302.89
Sundry Expenses	83.66

Interest on Note	91.25	
International Council	100.00	
Congregational World Movement	31.98	
		$7,951.89
Balance on hand, Dec. 31, 1919		611.23
		$8,563.12

REPORT OF TREASURER OF NATIONAL COUNCIL

Year Ending Dec. 31, 1920

RECEIPTS

Cash Balance, Jan. 1, 1920		$442.64
Per Capita Contributions from Churches	$38,084.81	
Advertising in Year Book	310.00	
Sale of Year Books & Other Printed Matter	1,091.81	
Interest on Deposits	71.15	
Loan from Cong'l S. S. Extension Society	2,500.00	42,057.77
		$42,500.41

EXPENDITURES

Salaries	$ 9,425.00
Clerical Labor	6,464.82
Traveling Expenses	621.04
Rent	1,185.00
Office Supplies	359.61
Postage	297.12
Telephone & Telegraph	135.71
Moving Expenses	185.25
Sundry Expenses	383.07
Year Book	14,065.52
Miscellaneous Printing	116.36
Council Meeting	35.49
Furniture	11.49
Insurance on Furniture	11.62

Printing Pamphlets, Leaflets, etc.....	971.32	
Council Minutes	1,566.90	
Advertising	179.60	
Expenses of Committees & Commissions:		
Executive Committee	274.37	
Commission on Missions	645.69	
Social Service	218.24	
Status of Ministry	152.87	
Comity, Federation & Unity	158.57	
Religious Education	31.75	
Organization	50.16	
Men's Work	9.44	
Evangelism	7.32	
Organic Unity	8.35	
Federal Council	809.00	
Loan to Pilgrim Tercentenary Fund..	1,800.00	
Repayment Loan—Old Colony Trust	1,500.00	41,680.68
Balance, December 31, 1920		819.73
		$42,500.41

PILGRIM TERCENTENARY FUND

Year Ending Dec. 31, 1920

RECEIPTS

Cash Balance, Jan. 1, 1920		$611.23
Contributions for International Council Expense	$23,740.46	
Special Tercentenary Subscriptions..	2,055.00	
Sale of Leaflets	1,172.91	
Interest on Deposits	7.48	
Loan from National Council	1,800.00	28,775.85
		$29,387.08

EXPENDITURES

International Council	$24,564.43
Every Member Drive	243.18

Salaries and Clerical Labor	1,683.13	
Traveling Expenses	140.64	
Leaflets and Slides	2,280.60	
Postage	66.13	
Interest on Note	22.50	
Miscellaneous	155.25	29,155.86
Balance on hand Dec. 31, 1920		231.22
		$29,387.08

REPORT OF THE SOCIAL SERVICE COMMISSION

The Social Service Commission of the National Council holds an advisory relationship to the Social Service Department of the Congregational Education Society. As such it has worked with the secretary of that department in shaping a program to be used by our churches looking toward a better understanding of social conditions as they exist in the world, and, if possible, to apply Christian principles to all social problems that are vexing society and dividing it into hostile groups.

The Commission has met each year of the biennium between meetings of the National Council. The broad scope of its field makes it necessary for the Commission to delimit its sphere of operation. Its members have felt that the problems most threatening and most in need of attention by the Christian forces of the country should be considered paramount and primary.

With this in mind, the Commission has considered the industrial question of primary importance, and for the time being it believes that this question should receive the immediate attention of the church. At a joint meeting of this Commission and the National and District Secretaries of the Congregational Education Society a program of social education was outlined. The character of that program was expressed in the findings of the conference. For purposes of social education the judgment was expressed that the Open Forum and the Discussion Group have dis-

tinct value in the dissemination of information and in creating community consciousness and cooperation. To accomplish the best results knowledge of the facts is absolutely essential to the creation of intelligent Christian judgment on moral issues.

It was suggested that discussion be directed by skilled leadership that it might not degenerate into mere debate and aimless talk. That sort of leadership should be developed by our Social Service Department, and placed at the disposal of our ministers and churches. Where information is not available from reliable and trustworthy sources, it should be gathered by interdenominational enterprise and by persons who are impartial in their attitude and thoroughly competent in the technique of scientific research.

It was further suggested that manuals of principles and methods of social education be prepared designed to meet the needs of discussion groups and age and grade groups. Much material is already at hand for ministers and Christian workers, and more of it is to be issued. There has never been a time in the history of the church when so much good material is at hand for those who are seeking light and leading on these questions.

The Commission finds itself confronted with a variety of demands within and without the church. There are those who honestly believe that the discussion of the industrial problem lies outside the legitimate province of the church's activities. They hold that the church has neither the machinery nor the intellectual equipment to make investigation and to arrive at intelligent and trustworthy conclusions. Its primary work is that of individual character building.

But it should be noted that the industrial problem is a human problem as well as an economic problem, and that the church cannot be indifferent to any human problem. It claims the right to a prophetic voice in the matter. Any system which affects human character comes within its legitimate domain. It claimed the right to speak on the slavery question. Later it threw the weight of its great

influence against the liquor traffic. And it claims the right still to make its gospel felt against any system which arrests righteous moral and spiritual development, destroys the creative impulse, and invades the exercise of a free personality. For the exercise of that right she makes no apology, and asks no sanction but the sanction of those eternal principles of justice and righteousness which are plainly the content of her God-given message thro Jesus Christ.

There are those who demand that the church place its endorsement upon one or another of the many social programs which have been launched to settle the social and industrial question. The Church, however, can never become a class institution. It knows neither capital nor labor, employer or worker, as such. It was not instituted to be a divider between battling groups or individuals. Its business is to apply to all classes, to all groups, and to all men, with even justice and in the spirit of Christ, those great ideals of love and brotherhood which lie basic in its life.

The great need of today is to know the facts. These facts are often suppressed or perverted. It is increasingly difficult to get them. Christian men and women have a right to know the situation as it really is; and upon the church we believe rests the obligation to search them out and give them to the people. This is being done, altho not without protest from some sources. An assistant to the Secretary has been appointed whose business it is to assist the officers of the Federal Council of Churches in making research in the field of industrial and social life.

The sensitiveness of many at this time and our inherited prejudices gives a delicacy to the whole situation. Patience and forbearance is the need of the hour. We are the unconscious victims of custom and convention, and things which seem wrong to ourselves seem to be perfectly right to others. We are all caught up in the meshes of the existing order, and many are the unwilling partners in a system which violates Christian standards.

But it is a matter of great encouragement that there are so many privileged men and women who are seeking to be

free from this thrall. Unselfishly they are moving toward a system in which justice and brotherhood can find a better expression. What that system shall be, none of us are wise enough to forecast. But that it must be a system in which the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ shall be dominant is our hope and dream.

The supreme need of the hour is an attitude of open-mindedness. There is right and wrong doubtless on both sides. Of one thing we may be sure, that those who are nearest the conflict are least able to see the significance of the conflict. "When two classes are exasperated with each other, the peace of the world is always kept by striking a new note." That note is found in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

That there are social and industrial wrongs and maladjustments in the world is self-evident. There is poverty for which the victims in many cases are in nowise responsible. There are recurring periods of unemployment which weigh heavily upon self-respecting men and women. There is an affluence which weakens and often completely destroys character. To none of these can the Christian church be indifferent.

Your Commission therefore believes that there is a great work for the church to do in this field. As a leader in the work of individual and social salvation it must face its task; and it calls for the cooperation of all who hold to a gospel of brotherhood.

The report of the Secretary of the Commission follows.

NICHOLAS VAN DER PYL, *Chairman*

REPORT OF SECRETARY OF COMMISSION

The work of the Social Service Department for the last biennium shows certain very distinct marks of progress. Not only has the Department developed its work with the Education Society, but the needs of the time also indicate that social reconstruction must be based on a thoroughgoing foundation of social education. Better social action

will come when we have paid the price of educating our people in the ideals and methods of a better social order.

Research Secretary

The most important addition to the work of the Social Service Department during the past years is the addition of a Research Secretary. Miss Agnes H. Campbell, a graduate of Wellesley College and a special student in social and economic research, has been employed as Research Secretary. Miss Campbell has in her work with the Government and in connection with the research work of the Interchurch World Movement shown remarkable ability. Her office is in New York City where she becomes part of an interdenominational staff of workers who are co-operating in industrial research under the leadership of Mr. F. E. Johnson of the Social Service Department of the Federal Council of Churches. A number of denominations are contributing to this co-operative plan, and its development to its present state of efficiency is probably the most notable accomplishment of the Social Service Departments of the various denominations. The work of this co-operative research bureau is along two lines, first in the production of social service studies for discussion groups in the churches, and second through its Information Service and Book Reviews it seeks to provide the facts which are vital to the Christian program of brotherhood. This Information Service is published bi-weekly, and goes to a large list of subscribers. It is being largely used by the religious press as a source of social information. It is meeting a real need of the church and the ministers. Special reports from time to time, such as the Deportations Report recently published, are put out by this Bureau. Mrs. Willard Straight has recently contributed liberally to the annual budget of the Research Department, and there seems to be ample ground for optimism regarding the development of this work.

Two study courses have recently been published, one entitled "The Christian View of Work and Wealth," the other one which is just coming from the press entitled "The Practice of Citizenship." They are for use in discussion

classes in the churches. Several other courses are in process of publication.

Industrial Conferences

Another important development during the past year has been the development of Industrial Conferences in the various cities in which ministers and laymen and representatives of labor unions have come together to discuss the problems of industry and practical plans for bettering present conditions. Your Secretary has participated in Conferences in Cincinnati, Dayton, Chicago, Wichita, St. Paul, Portland, and Sacramento. If these Conferences do no more than emphasize the need of more conscientious effort in social education on the part of the churches, they will have justified themselves.

Social Education

In co-operation with the Congregational Education Society it has been the purpose of the Secretary to more and more integrate the work of the Social Service Department in the general educational program of the Congregational Education Society. The resolutions passed at the Conference of National and District Secretaries of the Congregational Education Society at Chicago express objectives which are shared in by the Social Service Secretary and the Field Secretaries of the Society.

"With reference to Social Education, we express our judgment

(1) That the Open Forum and Discussion Group have distinct value in the dissemination of knowledge and in creating community consciousness and cooperation.

To be most successful such groups should be conducted under skilled leadership and such guidance as shall prevent them from degenerating into mere debate or aimless discussion. Their success does not necessarily depend upon ability to secure prominent speakers but rather upon the right use of the resources of the community.

As a practical help in this work we recommend that lists of available speakers similar to those sent out by the Social Service Department be prepared by each of the State and District offices.

(2) That knowledge of the facts is absolutely essential to the creation of intelligent Christian judgment on moral issues. Reliable information should therefore be given to

pastors and the members of churches.

Where such information is not available from trustworthy and impartial sources, it may become necessary for the Christian forces to make such investigations as are essential to the discovery of the facts.

Whenever this is done we believe that:

(a) It should be carried on as an interdenominational enterprise.

(b) The investigation should be made by persons who are impartial in attitude and thoroughly competent in the technique of scientific research.

(3) That as a means of more effectively promoting Social Education, there is need for the following types of literature:

(a) A Manual of Principles and Methods of Social Education, together with special leaflets on topics calling for fuller treatment and illustration, such as the Forum and Discussion Group, Social Activities in Special Types of Fields, etc.

(b) Study material suitable for each grade or age-group. For the elementary grades this should take the form of suggestions to teachers that will enable them to interpret the social aspects of the regular lessons and activities of the program.
For young people and adults there is need of more special courses along these lines.

We recommend that the Social Service Department secure the revision of the list of available material presented by Dr. Weston with such classification and annotations as shall make it a helpful guide, and that this list be distributed to the field secretaries as soon as possible.

We also recommend that the Department endeavor to secure the preparation and publication of additional courses in Social Education."

Two courses have been produced during this past year for use in Discussion Groups, "The Bible as a Community Book," "The Bible as a Rural Book."

Social Service Manual

A Social Service Manual is now being prepared to be placed in the hands of the pastors and chairmen of Social Service Committees, both local and state, which will set forth practical working plans to be used by the churches in adapting their work to the needs of their communities. This Manual will be ready for use by the first of September.

Brotherhood Work

A great deal of correspondence has come to this office during the past two years relative to the development of men's work in the various churches. The Secretary has also attended several National Conferences which had as their purpose the furthering of the brotherhood work of the American churches. The recent organization into a Federation of the Representatives of Brotherhood Work and Men's Work in the Various Churches ought to stimulate a much needed development along this line. So far as the Secretary has time he will be glad to co-operate in promoting this department of the church.

College Survey

At the request of the Congregational World Movement the Secretary consented to act as Secretary for the special committee appointed to survey the Congregational College of which President King is the Chairman. This has taken a great deal of time, and has called for considerable expenditure of energy in the visitation of the Colleges all over the Central West and the South. Because of heavy demands upon his time for the coming year it will not be possible to continue this work with the College Survey Committee.

Program of the Commission

The Social Service Commission during the past year has held two regular meetings at the time of the Secretaries' Mid-winter Conference in Chicago. One session was held in connection with Field Secretaries of the Educational Society. It seemed to the Commission that all the agencies for social education, especially the Open Forum and the Forum Discussion Class, should be promoted as rapidly as possible among the churches. The lack at the present time seems to be in the churches rather than in the groups which are producing literature for use by the churches. The Study Courses which are available are not used in any general way, and the blame for this must rest at the door of the pastors and educational leaders who are not promoting the study of Social Courses among their people.

Arthur E. Holt, *Secretary*

REPORT OF COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF THE MINISTRY

In the report of the Commission on Missions to the 1919 National Council was the folllowing:

"We therefore recommend that our official boards take action looking to a readjustment of salaries of secretaries, field workers and missionaries and that the churches aim to secure an advance of at least 25 per cent. in the salaries of the pastors."

A strong spontaneous sentiment developed at that meeting of the Council that every possible effort should be made to bring to the membership of the churches the imperative need of meeting this important requirement; not only as a matter of simple justice to pastors but as involving the fundamental question of encouraging capable, vigorous young men to enter the ministry as a life work. The creation of a Commission of laymen was recommended. The National Council approved the recommendation and your Commission was named.

In November following a communication was sent to all the churches of our order reciting the above facts and urging prompt and adequate action. Replies came from about one-fourth of the churches addressed, giving information as to salaries then paid; what advances had been made within 1, 2 and 5 years; whether pastor was giving full time; also proportion of churches that provided a parsonage or its equivalent.

This information has been supplemented by the lists of churches reported in the "Congregationalist" as increasing pastors' salaries and by reports from State Superintendents. Summing up all the data received it is evident that over hali of the Congregational churches of America have made increases in the salaries of pastors since the period of mounting prices set in. In a fair proportion of cases this increase has been ample. There can be no doubt that the constituency of the churches is alive to the importance of the work undertaken, and enough progress has been made to warrant the confident hope that the campaign will ultimately succeed.

Secretary Burton of the Congregational Home Missionary Society has given much valuable assistance. Through his office the active efforts of State Superintendents have been organized to take up and press the matter in their territories. Mr. Franklin Warner, acting as Secretary of this Commission, has been designated to cooperate with the Home Missionary Office in this work, from which substantial results are coming and will undoubtedly continue to materialize.

No formal meeting of the full Commission has been held, the Chairman not feeling warranted in putting the National Council to the considerable expense that would have been involved. He has however kept in touch with the members of the Commission through correspondence and in personal interviews as available and has endeavored to have the actions taken reflect the average judgment of the Commission.

Your Chairman attended a meeting of Chairmen of Commissions with the Executive Committee of the National Council in New York in June, 1920, and has participated in numerous conferences with Associations and Secretaries.

Sentiment is crystalizing into action, your Commission believes, but none too rapidly. Much remains to be done. There must be earnest, determined, persistent cooperation by all if the goal aimed at is to be attained.

M. A. Myers, *Chairman*.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ORGANIZATION

It becomes the first and very sad duty of your Commission on Organization to report to the National Council the death of the honored and beloved chairman of this Commission, the Rev. John P. Sanderson, D.D., who entered into rest on Sunday, July 11, 1920. He had just returned to his home from the meeting of the International Council, whose sessions he had attended and enjoyed, as he had those of the National Council in Grand Rapids a few months earlier. In these and other activities connected with his work, he lived his life to the full limit of his years, and died at the zenith of his usefulness. Few men in our denomination have attended so many meetings of this National Council as he, his attendance beginning in 1886, and continuing with few absences to the end of his life. His most conspicuous service to this National Council was that which culminated in Cleveland in 1907, when as Chairman of the Committee on Polity he presented a notable report that laid the foundation at Boston in 1910 for the appointment of the Commission of Nineteen. Your Commission attempts no biography or eulogy, but only this brief recognition of the loss to the Commission and to this Council by reason of Dr. Sanderson's death, and an expression of gratitude for his long and rich service to our churches and to the kingdom of God.

After his death, the Executive Committee of the National Council appointed Rev. William E. Barton as Chairman.

Unfortunately, the notes which Dr. Sanderson is known to have made, and which he discussed informally with the present chairman, are not available for use in this report. They have not as yet been found. They related particularly to the revision of the proposed Constitution for District Associations, so as to provide, if possible, for a basis of membership of ministers and for churches that might avoid the present difficulties.

Those difficulties are these:

If Ministerial Standing reposes in Associations composed of ministers, and separate from, or only nominally related to, District Associations of churches, the churches themselves have no voice in determining Ministerial Standing, or in deciding who shall possess it. This seems inconsistent with the Congregational principle. The practice grew up in New England under a theory which at first denied to the Association any prerogative such as subsequently, and especially after the action of this National Council in 1886, the Association was practically compelled to assume.

On the other hand, if ministers and churches are jointly to compose Associations of Ministers and Churches, then we have, what exists in most States, District Associations composed partly of delegates and partly of principals. This, certainly, is a parliamentary infelicity, and it is felt when associations seek incorporation, as some of them have sought and, notwithstanding this infelicity, obtained it.

An attempt has been made in some States to solve this problem by limiting the right of ministers, especially ministers, not pastors, to vote except in matters relating to licensure, ordination and ministerial standing. But this, manifestly does not meet the difficulties involved.

Ministers generally object to holding their standing in bodies in which they are subject to an authority in which they do not fully participate; and in most States ministers object to the old-time class condition of ministerial standing. Although it guarantees to a minister the right to be tried by a jury of his peers, it deprives the churches of their right to place the membership of their pastors in the same body in which the churches themselves have membership.

If all ministers were pastors, the solution of the problem would be less difficult. As it is, it is highly complicated. The difficulties are frankly confessed in recent books on Congregational polity, and were fully discussed by the Commission of Nineteen in the years from 1910 to 1913.

Dr. Sanderson was earnestly working at the problem when death overtook him. Your Commission has no desire to present a hastily prepared report on so important a matter. We are not confronted by any crisis which calls for

haste. We therefore make this report of progress, and we, or our successors, will welcome any light which members of this Council or of the churches shall present for their assistance.

Your Commission has pleasure in reporting that the Constitution for the International Council which this Commission presented in 1919, and which was referred by the National Council to the International Council, was adopted by that body, with slight amendments, at the meeting in Boston, in July, 1920.

William E. Barton
Arthur H. Armstrong
Cleveland R. Cross
Edgar L. Heermance
Charles S. Nash
Miriam Choate Hobart

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ORDAINED WOMEN, CHURCH ASSISTANTS, AND LAY WORKERS

The resolution under which this Commission was appointed was adopted by the National Council at Grand Rapids, October 24, 1919, and reads, as follows:

That in view of the already effective service of some women ministers in our own as well as in other denominations, a Committee be appointed to secure information; first, as to the number of women now in the ministry, their standing and efficiency; and second, as to the need of women ministers. And that, in view of the increasing use of lay preaching by our English brethren, this matter of lay preaching be committed to this same Committee; and that to this Committee be referred all matters dealing with Church Assistants and germane subjects; this Committee to report at the next Council.

This somewhat broad charter easily divides itself into three general subjects of inquiry, on each of which your Commission finds itself able to submit a report.

I. ORDAINED WOMEN

The question of the ordination of women was discussed by the older authorities in Congregational Polity. Without exception, so far as we are aware, their judgment was unfavorable to women's preaching, and many of them opposed the voting of women in church meetings. John Robinson set forth what he conceived to be the privileges of a woman in the church:

And for women, they are debarred by their sex, as from ordinary prophesying, so from other dealings where they take authority over the man. . . . . They may make profession of faith, or confession of sin, say Amen to the church's prayers, sing psalms vocally, accuse a brother of sin, witness an accusation, or defend themselves being accused; yea, commonly, in a case extraordinary, namely where no man will, I see not but a woman may reprove the church, rather than suffer it to go on in apparent wickedness.—"Justification of Separation"; in Works II, 215.

In another connection Robinson declared that the apostle's prohibition of women's speaking in meeting is perpetual.

Dr. Dexter set forth his fundamental declaration concerning the equality of members in a Congregational church in this headline:

Every member of such a church has equal essential rights, powers, and privileges, with every other (except so far as the New Testament and common sense makes some special abridgement in the case of females and youthful members). —"Congregationalism," p. 38.

The first Appendix to that invaluable work is one of thirty-four solidly printed pages on "Female and Minor Suffrage in Congregational Churches," in which he massed the resources of his great erudition against women's speaking in meeting or exercising a vote in the affairs of the church.

Dr. Ross was silent as to the ordination of women, but said concerning their voting:

Women were formerly denied by usage the right of suffrage in our churches, both in England and in America.... But female suffrage in the churches has increased until now it is common.—"The Church Kingdom," pp. 258.9.

Ordination of women to the ministry is comparatively recent in Congregationalism. So far as your Commission is aware, the subject has not hitherto received serious attention at the hands of the National Council.

From the beginning of its history Oberlin College undertook to extend the privileges of complete education not only to men but to what they called "that deprived and misunderstood sex," the women. A number of women have graduated from the theological department at Oberlin. The first woman graduate of Union Theological Seminary received her diploma twenty years ago. Most of our theological seminaries now admit women to the privilege of study and graduation on equal terms with the men; the responsibility for their future rests, of course, with the churches.

As yet there has been no ordination of women, so far as your Commission is aware, by Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Swedenborgens, or Mennonites. The Reformed Church also has no actual ordination of women, but there

is no rule against it in that body. The Primitive Methodists do not ordain women, but welcome to their pulpits women ordained in other denominations, as for instance, the Free Methodists, who have about twelve hundred male ministers and about two hundred ordained circuit-riding women. The Unitarians, the Universalists, the Friends, the Shakers, the Nazarenes, and the United Evangelical Church ordain women on equal terms with men. An organization known as the International Women Preachers' Association has been formed. In it fifteen denominations are said to be represented.

As is well known, Christian Science organizations have no ordained ministry, but their worship is led by a first and a second reader, one of whom is regularly a woman.

Denominations that have as yet ordained no women are discussing the question whether a woman may be ordained. In England the case of Miss Maude Royden stands out conspicuous as that in which a woman has occupied with a considerable measure of success one of the largest pulpits in that country. What recognition shall now be accorded to her in the Anglican Church of which she is a member, is a problem now discussed in Great Britain.

As an actual fact, not many women are serving as ministers in any of the denominations where the ministry is freely open to them. The Cumberland Presbyterians have 964 men and 25 women; the Unitarians 491 men and 14 women; the Disciples 500 men and 2 women. In no denomination except the Free Methodists, where one minister in seven is a woman, is any large fraction of ministerial work performed by women.

The Congregational Year Book with the statistics of 1919 shows a total of 5695 Congregational ministers. Of these 67, or .012 are women. Your Commission has gathered their names out of the Year Book and made the following classification:

Pastors of Churches	18
Joint Pastorate	14
Religious Education and Church Assistants	14
Not Indicated	21

Among the pastors of churches, seven are in New England, one is in Pennsylvania, three are in Illinois and Iowa, two in the South, and five in the West. All the churches served by women as pastors are very small churches.

Of the fourteen in joint pastorates, all or virtually all are serving with their husbands, either as associates in the same church, or as pastoral associates in small yoked churches.

The Religious Education group includes two Professors and two Missionaries. The others, all or nearly all, are assistants in local churches.

Of the twenty-one whose status is not indicated, most if not all, are married; several of them are wives of ministers, who doubtless assist their husbands unofficially but have no ministerial status in the churches which their husbands are presently serving.

Your Commission did not think it necessary to send a questionnaire to these sixty-seven women, but had occasion to correspond with a number of them. In general, it appeared that women who had pursued regular courses in theological seminaries and had been ordained, had found their apparent field of largest usefulness in Religious Education, or some similar form of service.

A large proportion and probably a majority of the ordained women now listed in our Year Book, are or were, wives of ministers. Their service as unofficial assistant pastors grew until they were called under some special stress to seek ordination. In a few cases that have come to the knowledge of your Commission, women were ordained in war-time in order that their husbands might be released for war service.

So far as your Commission has knowledge, no scandal or seriously unpleasant incident has grown out of the ordination of women in our denomination. The service which these women are rendering is for the most part a quiet, inconspicuous service and one to which they appear to have been called. We do not discover any marked tendency to increase the proportion of our women pastors. We have no example in this country of a woman occupying a position

analogous to that of Miss Maude Royden in London; nor does it appear that Miss Royden herself is likely to be permanently as prominent as for a time she was while she was preaching in the City Temple.

Doubtless some women have been ordained who could have rendered all the service that was necessary in their case as unordained assistants; but the same is true of some men on whom hands have been laid suddenly. Our ordained women are too few in number and too modest or at least inconspicuous in their form of service to appear at present to offer to our denomination any serious problem.

So far as your Commission is aware there is no occasion for a ruling on the part of the National Council beyond the mere recognition of the existing status. Our denomination has a small group of women whose ordination is as regular as that of the men in our ministry. This National Council could not deprive them of their status if it so desired, and it has no such desire. In general, it would appear that a woman who is securing an education for religious service could find a larger sphere of usefulness in Religious Education, or in some other form of work as a church assistant, than in the independent pastorate; but a few women are serving as pastors of small churches, and serving successfully. We can neither challenge the validity of their ordination nor deny the fact of their evident usefulness.

II. CHURCH ASSISTANTS

The special training of church assistants, many of them women, has been a marked feature of our own denominational development and that of kindred denominations in recent years. So far as the National Council is concerned, it is unnecessary to go farther back than 1901, at which time the Council adopted a Minute, approving "the recent establishment in Hartford Theological Seminary and Chicago Theological Seminary of Training School for lay workers, including the training of young women who desire to consecrate themselves to the work of deaconesses." The Council expressed its "profound sympathy with the movement which looks to the special training of forces long unused, but which are essential to the speedy and fuller development

of the kingdom of God."—Minutes of 1901, page 24.

At that meeting a special Committee on Deaconesses was appointed. Its chairmen was Rev. Edward F. Williams. It also approved the action of the committee of the Illinois General Association in having organized the American Congregational Deaconess Association, and encouraged that institution to expand its plan so as to become national in its scope.

Three years later this Committee reported showing that 36 young women had received instruction in the Christian Institute of Chicago Seminary, and outlined in detail the work of the American Deaconess Association, which already owned a Hospital in Pana, Illinois, a country home at Dover, Illinois, and whose students for two years had been lodged in the house formerly owned and occupied by the late President Fisk of Chicago Seminary, but who as members of the Christian Institute had recently removed to Keyes Hall.

In 1907, the Committee with Dr. Williams still its chairman, presented an elaborate report congratulating the churches on the training of women at Chicago, Hartford and Cleveland. It outlined the history of the Deaconess Movement in other countries. The report presented at that time is an excellent history of the deaconess work in America and elsewhere. However, from that time the Deaconess movement disappeared not only from the records of this National Council but practically from our churches. After a good deal of discussion as to whether the work would better be done by the Deaconess Association or by the Institute of Chicago Seminary, it was practically discontinued by both organizations.

The title "deaconess," though for a time it appeared likely to be popular, did not commend itself permanently to the young women of our churches. Our workers did not in general care to wear a distinctive garb, nor to adopt a name which after its first novelty had a sound rather alien to our Congregational churches. Moreover, it was found that while in other communions deaconesses were employed for a bare support in the expectation that they themselves would be supported in their later years, the movement with us had

no such foundation or promise. A variety of causes, not all of which need here be outlined, brought the Deaconess movement as such to an end.

In 1909, almost immediately after the closing of the Institute in which young women had been trained by Chicago Theological Seminary, the Congregational Training School for Women was incorporated in Chicago and has been in existence ever since. Hartford, Schauffler, Yale, Union, Oberlin and other schools are now training young women for special religious service.

The development of the work in Schauffler Missionary Training School has a history of its own. It grew out of the effort to meet a local need in missionary service among foreign speaking people. At first it was hardly more than an adjunct to the heroic work of Dr. Schauffler among the Bohemian and kindred peoples of Cleveland. It has widened its sphere of influence and developed its curriculum in response to a Providential need until it now trains young women, not only as missionary visitors, but for all forms of service as Church Assistants and has domiciled under a single roof almost as many nationalities and tongues as were present at the Day of Pentecost.

It does not fall to this Commission to recommend particular institutions, nor to suggest changes or combinations of existing organizations. There has been discussion whether the work at Schauffler and that of the Congregational Training School might profitably be combined, or the line of demarcation between their respective types of work more clearly defined. That question does not concern this Commission. We are set to inquire concerning the product of these schools and others, and of the need of the churches for young women such as these institutions provide. The need exists beyond the ability of both institutions to supply it, and both schools deserve the support and affection of the churches.

In 1915, there was organized the Congregational League of Church Assistants. This League had from the outset the encouragement of Dr. Herring, Secretary of the National Council's general office. Miss Eleanore Nichols, Dr. Her-

ring's Assistant, gave much labor to the development of this movement. Miss Mabel Agnes Taylor, dean of the Congregational Training School for Women, was the first President of the organization. Her gracious character and helpful influence are remembered with affection by all who were associated with her in the beginnings of this work.

Nearly three hundred names are now enrolled in our Year Book of Church Assistants, both men and women. The Executive Committee of the National Council at the meeting in Grand Rapids in 1919 repeated a paragraph from its report of two years previous, especially commending this work.

This may serve as a sufficient outline of the history and definition of the present status of the movement. Church assistants somewhat naturally group themselves into the following classes,—Educational Directors, Pastors' Assistants, Church Visitors, Church Secretaries, Church Missionaries and Social Workers. These several functions are varied and combined according to the need of the field and the ability of the worker. Not all of the Church Assistants are women; an increasing number of young men find in some of these forms of service a field of usefulness.

III. LAY WORKERS

Your Commission notes with interest some indication of the revival in Great Britain of the practice of lay preaching; and could heartily wish that in this country also there might be a widespread belief in and practice of it. There is nothing in the New Testament which indicates that preaching is the monopoly of a particular class within the church. The Apostolic recognition of specific gifts at no point indicates a belief that only ordained men should preach. Our fathers stood for the liberty of prophesying. It is a precious right, not to be monopolized by the clergy. In the judgment of your Commission it would be of immense value to our churches if groups of laymen would give themselves to the preaching of the Word. Village churches have within convenient reach country school houses where small congregations could be gathered on Sunday afternoons or week evenings; city churches have adjacent to them fields to

which the pastor can give only a limited attention, but which the churches might serve through the unpretentious but earnest and effective labor of consecrated laymen. Such service would richly develop the spiritual life of these church members. It would develop the spirit of democracy and devotion in the local church. It ought to prove contagious in its influence upon the life of the other church members. It would serve more than almost any other one thing to disabuse the public mind of the idea that the present day church is working out its salvation through the vicarious and remunerative service of a hired ministry.

Your Commission unites in the following recommendation:

(1) **Ordained Women**—Inasmuch as the responsibility for the ordination of ministers rests upon Councils *pro re nata* and District Associations, and ministerial standing belongs to the care of our District Associations, this National Council finds no occasion to issue any deliverance beyond a recognition of the fact that our ministry includes a small number of ordained women, most of them called into the ministry by particular needs and apparently justifying their call.

(2) **Church Assistants**—The National Council expresses the hearty approval of our churches as here represented of the call to Christian service of both men and women as Directors of Religious Education, and of women especially trained for educational, secretarial, social and other forms of church service. This Council desires to dignify in every proper way the standing of these servants of our churches, and approves the printing of their names in the Year Book and the encouragement of their national organization by our National Council office. We commend to the favor and support of our churches the institutions which are training women for these special forms of service and we desire to encourage our churches in the employment of such workers and in the training of young women for these positions.

(3) **Lay Workers**—The National Council heartily approves the employment of lay workers as teachers, preachers, directors of social work, and leaders in such forms of Chris-

tian activity as the churches find it expedient to inaugurate and direct. We advise that where laymen feel called to preach and the call is recognized either by the local church or by the District Association, approbation to preach, granted either by the local church or by the District Association, take the place of licensure, and that such approbation be distinguished from licensure, which would appear to belong more appropriately to candidates for the ministry, and in some instances to carry functions not intended to be conveyed by a certificate of approbation. This Council earnestly hopes for a revival of lay preaching, believing that in almost any church a group of laymen thus exercising their gifts would be a blessing to the church, a means of extension of the kingdom of God and a very profitable exercise for the preachers themselves.

(4) **Discharge of Commission**—The duty of this Commission was specific and is fulfilled in the presentation of this report. Believing that only such Commissions should be continued from Council to Council as have continuing tasks of considerable magnitude, we ask that this report be approved and this Commission discharged.

William E. Barton
Charles W. Burton
Fred L. Brownlee
James A. Jenkins
Edward H. Knight
Mary W. Mills
Margaret Taylor

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Commission on Evangelism

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National Council of the Congregational Churches of the U.S.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON EVANGELISM

The Commission on Evangelism has endeavored to find the facts that challenge us, to glean from the churches methods that work; and to put facts and methods within the reach of all. Our service to the churches has been in three fields:

1. The recruiting of new membership
2. The restoring of lapsed membership
3. The promotion of the devotional life without which the church can neither recover the back-slider nor win the unconverted.

Recruiting New Membership

In this field, the facts are stern indeed. Today fifty odd millions of Americans are utterly unrelated to any kind of organized religion. These are largely Protestant in inheritance and sympathy. The average Congregational church has an untouched constituency for which no other is spiritually responsible, equalling at least its present membership, and in many cases, twice as many.

Twenty years ago, our churches were growing a little faster than the population and thus slowly gaining on their entire responsibility. During the last sixty years the Congregational churches have reported a net increase in membership each year save one (in 1918, there was a net loss of 293); and for most of that time our church growth equaled the growth in population. For the last ten years, the population has grown thirty per cent. faster than the Congregational churches. Our evangelistic program has not been efficient enough to keep us from losing ground. The deflection of pastors and church workers, no doubt had an influence here also.

There is an earnest and well-nigh universal desire to meet this challenge by sound evangelism. Great as has been the service of the professional evangelist through the Christian centuries, there is a general distrust of the mass

evangelism of the professional, not only because we dislike vulgarity and grotesqueness, but because so often lasting results were not commensurate. Many churches, at least, have given up expecting to take the kingdom of heaven by this kind of violence.

Our suggested program of parish evangelism is based upon the experience of a number of churches of various sorts and sizes. It follows in the main the Christian year. The fall period leads up to the November or December communion. The Lenten period covers not only the six and a half weeks of Lent culminating at the communion near Easter, but preparation beginning with the new year embracing a program of doctrinal and evangelistic preaching; the enlisting and training of personal workers; the pastor's training class; and the deepening of the prayer life of the people. The third period extends to the close of the school year and the summer communion.

Evangelism of adults through membership committees. Large membership committees of men and women have been organized under leaders for each small group, and cards with the names and necessary facts about those for whom the church is responsible have been prepared. A systematic effort carried over a number of weeks with regular weekly meetings for the assignment of names and the discussion of effective methods of invitation, has produced happy results. The success of this membership committee work has depended upon four principles: 1. Knowing the facts—by listing all who were to be invited; 2. Having an adequate plan—simply but thoroughly understood; 3. Extending the responsibility for personal work—by insisting that the responsibility for inviting others is universal, and that less developed Christians may profitably give the invitation to others; 4. Undergirding the program with personal and social prayer.

Evangelism of adolescents through pastors' training classes. Because younger adolescents are not ready to come into the church without systematic and intelligent preparation, pastors' training classes have been organized. In many churches, the membership committee has functioned

by securing the attendance of the boys and girls at the pastor's class. In some churches, the thoroughness with which the parish was surveyed and all within the proper ages invited, exceeded previous experience, and the results in attendance, interest and in the numbers entering the church showed how efficiently Congregationalists could meet this most important part of their evangelistic responsibility.

These classes are a part of the Education Society's program as well as that of the Commission on Evangelism. Fifteen hundred churches conducted pastor's training classes this past Lenten season. The circulation of the "Text-book for the Pastor's Training Class" has been over forty thousand, in addition to a large amount of material distributed for the Education Society.

The results seem to prove that the methods of meeting these stern facts have been useful in a great many churches. Pastors and church workers have come to a fuller realization of the value of programing the activities of the church. Missionary education, the financial canvass, social service, and religious educational activities as well as evangelism have been stimulated; and there is a new feeling of optimism and esprit de corps. In correspondence and in conferences, we have discovered that pastors are greatly encouraged.

Among the features of the work which should receive attention in due course of time is the development of methods of summer evangelism, such effort is desperately called for in general, it is peculiarly adapted to the work of the colored churches of which we have approximately one hundred and fifty. For most of these, the summer is the most favorable season for evangelistic service. The American Missionary Association is contemplating an appropriation of five hundred dollars to assist this Commission in developing literature which will be of particular helpfulness to these churches. Here is a wide field of service and one that promises very great benefit.

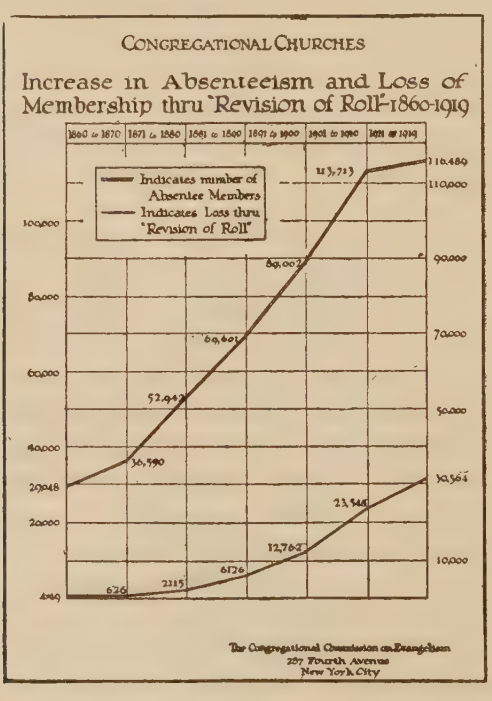
Undoubtedly the results of the two years' work of the Commission will appear more largely in the future than at

present, but during 1919, there was an increase in the number of accessions for the year of nearly ten thousand. The figures for 1920 show an increase of 32,000, making the total accessions the largest in the history of the denomination. Not a few churches report accessions at the 1921 Easter Communion larger than any time in their history, indicating that we may hope for a still better record this current year.

Membership Waste

Still sterner facts every Congregationalist ought to consider:

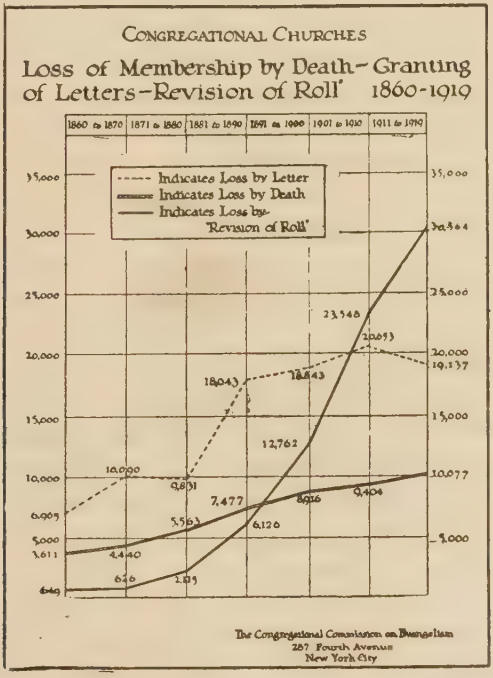
1. That one out of every seven members is an absentee.
2. That we drop members by "revision of the roll" at the rate of about a hundred a day.
3. That unless we reclaim absentees and restore the lapsed, we shall require a continued Pentecost to keep alive.



Church Membership Waste through Absenteeism.

The "graph" on page 6 (No. 1) illustrates that absentee members have increased fourfold in the last sixty years. For the correction of our excessive absenteeism, the Commission is serving as a clearing house for the churches, asking that lists of non-resident members with all the available information be sent in. The office of the Commission will assemble and distribute the information to the churches in the community to which the absentees have removed. We cannot change the nomadic tendencies of our eager, restless age, but by thorough cooperation, many of these nomadic church members may be promptly invited to church worship and work in their new homes.

Church Membership Waste through "Revision of the Roll." Even more startling has been the increase of waste in church membership through the rapidly rising "revision of the roll."



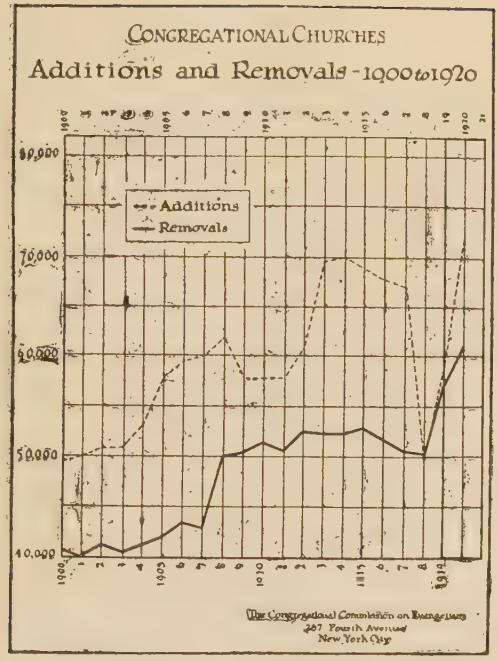
The above "graph" (No. 2) shows that the percentage of loss in membership by death remains about the same.

Loss by letter has fluctuated. The number of members lost by "revision of the roll increased from 649 in 1860 to 30,564 in 1919 and 1920.

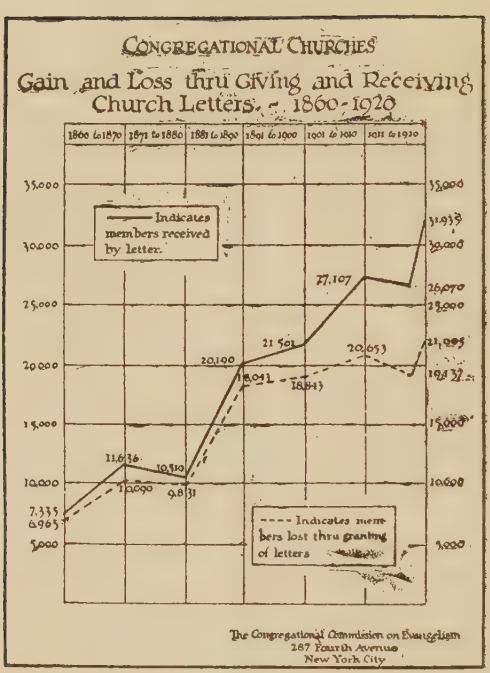
Dr. Burton has remarked that a comparison between the record of members lost by death and the members lost by "revision of the roll" may indicate the growing efficiency of medical science as compared with the lack of an effective method of church administration. Should we not give to the spiritually sick something comparable to the treatment the physician gives to those physically ill—something of diagnosis, treatment and prescribed exercise? As a denomination we must face the fact that we are losing members through "revision of the roll," and have been for a decade, at a rate approximating one hundred per day. We consider a padded church roll a species of dishonesty, but too often names are cut off by "revision of the roll" because adequate effort has not been made to keep in touch with absentees and to reclaim non-attending resident members.

The problem of lapsing members remaining in the community can be largely met if the churches will face these facts, and will give the Commission the benefit of their experience, that successful methods may be given the widest possible publicity, as we believe the publication of sound methods for correcting an evil will usually encourage even the half-hearted to attempt its correction. We evidently need to study and improve the shepherding work as we have approximately 110,000 absentees and are adding to this list from 30,000 to 40,000 a year. Other denominations are having the same experience and all must make careful study of the methods to meet this situation.

As in the field of recruiting for new membership, so in the field of membership waste, we believe we can meet this very serious challenge if we observe the four principles already suggested for evangelism: 1. Know the facts; 2. Have an adequate plan; 3. Extend the responsibility for personal work; 4. Undergird the program with personal and social prayer.



Graph No. 3 illustrates the variations in additions and removals during the last twenty years. The number of additions in 1900 were 48,602 and the removals for all causes 40,521. For 1920 the additions 71,857, and the removals 60,898, for both items the largest figures for the period.



Graph No. 4 illustrates the gains and losses for sixty years in the giving and receiving letters. It will be noticed that there has been a steady increase in both of these items thru the years but that at all times we have received more letters than we have granted.

Promotion of the Devotional Life

The third service which the Commission seeks to render is the promotion of the devotional life without which the church can neither recover the back-slider, nor win the unconverted.

In many churches, the prayer meeting has declined, family worship and even grace at the table have largely disappeared, and attendance at public worship for many church members has become intermittent. In some parishes the average congregation for the Sunday morning worship is not more than one fourth of the membership and in most churches, if the average attendance is one half the church membership, pastor and people are satisfied. Christians have neglected the assembling of themselves together.

The uniform experience of the centuries shows that when Christians neglect social worship, habits of secret prayer decay, and the knowledge of God as a vital personal experience which is the only adequate dynamic for noble living, is weakened. Only the praying church can be a living and a converting church.

Each year the Commission has prepared daily devotions for the period from Ash Wednesday to Easter, of readings from the gospels, with a few lines of exposition, a short manual of collects for daily use, and a half dozen of the hymns which every Christian ought to know by heart. This year approximately two thirds of our churches have used "The Fellowship of Prayer," its total circulation has been over 200,000. Its unexpectedly large use shows that pastors and churches are vitally conscious of the most important factor in the life of the church; developed, intelligent, faith-founded worship.

Christians are not regular at church because they say they find so little in church. They find so little at the church service because they carry so little into the church service. They have not trained themselves in the divine art of prayer. Few things will do more to make real the prayer life of the individual church member than the promotion of a fellowship of prayer.

REPORT ON LITERATURE.

	On hand Apr. 1920	Publish.	Total	Used	On hand Apr. 1921
Fellowship of Prayer		203,000	203,000	203,000	
Lenten Hymns		15,000	15,000	15,000	
Gospel of John		25,300	25,300	25,300	
Textbook for Pastor's Class		50,000	50,000	42,000	8,000
Personal Evangelism from Interch.			25,000	16,000	9,000
Call to High Service		20,000	25,000	25,000	
Congregationalism	5,000	100,000	100,000	90,000	10,000
Win One More			26,000	20,000	6,000
Enlistment Cards from Nat. Coun. Office	26,000		3,000	3,000	
Pastor's Training Class			5,000	4,300	700
Sermon Suggestion	5,000	5,000	5,000	4,700	300
Program of Evangelism		16,675	16,675	12,175	4,500
Cong. Handbook from Congregationalist			5,000	5,000	
Miscellaneous			4,500	3,500	1,000
TOTALS	36,000	434,975	508,475	468,975	39,500

Lenten Literature for 1921 Compared with 1920.

	No. Churches	Orders Recd. 1920	Orders Recd. 1921
Alabama	84	10	12
Arizona	10	9	5
Arkansas	3	3	2
California	246	24	44
Colorado	109	20	16
Connecticut	326	117	265
Florida	52	13	19
Georgia	97	14	6
Idaho	43	13	9
Illinois	328	78	151
Indiana	40	6	22
Iowa	280	40	76
Kansas	140	25	40
Kentucky	12	5	7
Louisiana	31	6	9
Maine	265	54	69
Maryland	5	..	3
Massachusetts	604	227	439
Michigan	291	36	95
Minnesota	227	28	69
Mississippi	5	1	1
Missouri	64	26	28
Montana	104	21	23
Nebraska	194	47	43
Nevada	1	..	..
New Hampshire	189	51	88
New Jersey	49	36	46
New Mexico	7	4	2
New York	308	156	317
N. Carolina	63	15	5
N. Dakota	232	30	36
Ohio	239	92	132
Oklahoma	50	12	9
Oregon	60	15	7
Pennsylvania	98	36	89
Rhode Island	41	6	27
S. Carolina	10	4	2
S. Dakota	220	47	44
Tennessee	24	2	6
Texas	32	15	16
Utah	11	3	5
Vermont	215	47	71
Virginia	4	..	5
Washington	184	17	59
West Virginia	2	1	1
Wisconsin	266	61	105
Wyoming	25	4	10
Washington, D. C.		1	11
Alaska, etc.		1	
Honolulu		1	14
Missionary Societies		79	513
Spec. Complimentary		42	
Total		1604	3073

Finances

This literature is supplied the churches at the cost of printing which by placing contracts for 50 and 100 thousand lots is very reasonable. The majority of the churches are willing to pay for their literature. The treasurer's report will show that the receipts from sale of literature are more than $4,000.00 which is approximately one-half of the total bill for printing, much of which is for office use.

We have not yet developed a very satisfactory plan for churches usually do not have a contingent fund out of which they can pay such bills. Hence a special appeal must be made to the congregation, or the pastor has to pay out of his own pocket. These churches put forth every effort to meet their denominational apportionment and they feel this should cover the very modest cost of the literature. This is a subject with which we will have to deal next year. No request for literature has ever been refused nor has the Commission ever adopted a debt collecting policy.

The report of the treasurer shows that we end the year with bills paid and a balance of $13.63 in the treasury. This especially favorable condition is due to a large-hearted support of the Board of Directors of the Congregational Home Missionary Society. Our budget allowance, included in the budget of the Congregational Home Missionary Society was for $15,000 with the understanding that our allotment of funds would be in proportion to the actual receipts of the Congregational Home Missionary Society through the Congregational World Movement. Regardless of the fact that the Congregational Home Missionary Society received an amount much less than its budget called for, the Board of Directors, without formal request from this Commission, voted the Commission first $12,500, and finally to cover last bills, voted in March an additional amount of $2,500. This support by the Congregational Home Missionary Society should receive from the church at large the highest appreciation as it does from the members of this Commission. The fact that it is the one item in the budget of the society which was not allowed to suffer because of the shortage in apportionment receipts indicates the high valuation placed upon the work of the Commission.

Treasurer's Report for the Year Ending March 31, 1921

Receipts		
Balance, April 1, 1920	$ 780.17	
C. H. M. S.	13,791.62	
Sale of Literature	4,208.51	
		$18,780.30
Disbursements		
Salaries and Clerical Service	6,949.01	
Rent, Telephone and Advertising	596.83	
Postage, Freight and Express	1,099.22	
Traveling	1,184.16	
Publications, Printing, Stationery	8,351.03	
Incidental Expense	300.00	
Sundries	128.64	
Equipment	157.81	
		$18,766.68
Balance April 1, 1921		$13.62

Administration

The Commission on Evangelism has strenuously endeavored to serve every church in our fellowship, and to do it promptly. At times the office in New York has been overwhelmed with orders, but during the past biennium with the exception of one day, every order has received attention on the day in which it was received, and either the material sent out, or at least a reply of explanation mailed if the material had to be secured elsewhere.

The total circulation of literature by the Commission during the past year has been approximately 500,000. Of this 41,000 pieces have been distributed through state offices and 29,500 through the Pilgrim Press; the rest has been from the office. During the period from January to Easter, more than 3,000 packages of literature were sent out to the churches.

General Items of Interest.

	1920	1921
Office Correspondence		
Form Letters mailed during the year, estimated	40,000	309,000
General Office Correspondence during the year estimated	1,500	2,200
Literature Published		
Evangelistic Literature published—number of pieces	370,000	508,475
Evangelistic Literature distributed—number of pieces	332,000	468,975
Evangelistic Literature distributed through State Offices		41,000

The Commission has been happy to represent our denomination in the Evangelistic Commission of the Federal Council where many of our proven methods have been adopted as a part of the Federal Council program of evangelism. In the same way, we have cooperated with the Commissions of other denominations. The secretary of the Commission was a member of a team composed of the secretaries of various denominational boards which visited twelve of our largest cities last fall, holding ministerial institutes on evangelism. The same are to be repeated in September, and in January of the coming year.

The Commission desires to express its thanks to our pastors who have spoken on the program of evangelism before state and associational meetings in all parts of the country, at conferences with seminary students, and have assisted in the retreats in which groups of pastors have come together for the deepening of their own devotional life and for discussion and promotion of the methods and objectives of the evangelistic program of the church.

Now if ever the Lord commands us, saying "Speak unto the children of the Pilgrims that they go forward;" and recruit for Christ and His church all the unchurched for which we are responsible; doing our utmost to restore all lapsed members, for the promotion of an intelligent and dynamic spiritual life.

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1921:D National Congregational Council. 1921. Advance Reprots, D.

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